

**Lawndale Library  
County of Los Angeles Public Library**

**Community Needs Assessment**

January 2004

Prepared by  
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I. Introduction and Executive Summary

The City of Lawndale is a geographically compact, densely populated and ethnically diverse community of 31,711 people in the South Bay area of Los Angeles County. The City borders Interstate Highway 405, occupying a two square mile area south of the Los Angeles International Airport. By 2020, the population is projected to grow over 10% to reach 35,000 - approximately 17,500 people per square mile, one of the most densely populated communities in the Los Angeles region.

Fifty-two percent of the population is Hispanic of all races. The 2000 Census reported that the community is 42.2% White, 12.6% African American and 9.6% Asian. Lawndale is a community of working class and middle class families, many of whom live on limited incomes with both parents working full-time. Latch key children are the norm in Lawndale. Single-parent households are commonplace and in many two-parent families, the adults work opposite shifts so that children rarely spend time with one or both of their parents.

The community's youth in particular are put at-risk by the combination of social and economic factors that characterize Lawndale. Many families live in densely populated neighborhoods, usually in rented homes or apartments with high occupancy turnover. Limited incomes are the norm with parents working both day and night shifts to make ends meet. Many parents' limited English speaking and reading ability prevent them from helping their children with their studies. Law enforcement authorities report that approximately 350 street gang members are known to live within the service area and that approximately 12 juvenile arrests are made each month, usually for narcotics, assault, and burglary offenses.

Children and youth 19 years and younger make up approximately 35% of the population. During the 2002/03 academic year, 10,726 students attended school in Lawndale – 76% of elementary school age children qualified to receive free or reduced-cost lunches and 43% were members of families that are eligible for Assistance for Families with Dependant Children. Nearly 66% of K-8 students are Hispanic, with 34% of those students identified as English Learners. Among high school students, 58% are Hispanic, 49% speak a language other than English as their primary language and 24% are English Learners.

School libraries are maintained at each high school library, open only during school hours. The elementary schools and the middle school each have a library, but only the middle school is staffed by certificated personnel. The elementary schools are managed by parent volunteers. School libraries' collections are too limited to meet student needs, especially in the areas of high-interest/low-vocabulary titles and other books that would support students who want to improve their reading level.

Many of Lawndale's youth are at-risk for substance abuse and illegal gang-related activity. The high unemployment rate, low-income levels, low levels of educational attainment, and high crime rates in the area all contribute to an environment that endangers the young. Parents, Lawndale City officials, School Districts and the community at large have made the welfare of youth a major community priority. Through this project, the Centinela Valley Union High School District, the County Library and the City are planning creative service initiatives that will foster job skills, college placement and career building among Lawndale's youth population. Following a City-funded Youth Master Plan completed in 2001, a youth recreation center opened in Lawndale in 2002.

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Momentum from that success has generated significant interest and support for additional youth support resources, including enthusiasm for a new library for the community.

Most Lawndale residents have limited access to computer technology. Few households have computers, according to surveys conducted by the Lawndale Elementary School District. Students at Lawndale's two high schools can use the computers in their school libraries during the school day, but have very limited access to computers for either research or for preparing school assignments during the evening or on the weekend.

Lawndale residents of all ages need opportunities to increase their computer and information literacy skills. Training classes on many computer related topics were requested through the community survey and were mentioned by focus group participants. Lawndale civic leaders are especially concerned that young people develop career paths to help them secure jobs and become productive citizens.

The existing library is a 3,203 square foot building that has operated since 1955 as a service outlet of the County of Los Angeles Public Library. The current facility is grossly undersized and unable to meet the community's current library service needs by nearly every recognized library service indicator. Both the County Library and the City of Lawndale are well aware of the service deficits of the current library facility. They have collaborated to improve the situation previously and are committed to continue this work until they are successful. In 1990, the County Library applied unsuccessfully for State Construction Bond funds to expand the existing Lawndale Library. The current needs assessment supports a renewed effort by the County Library, in association with the City of Lawndale and the Centinela Valley Union High School District, to secure funding for a new and larger library facility for the community.

A 17,360 square foot facility is proposed to serve the residents of Lawndale. The new facility would enable the library's collections to grow to 86,250 books and audiovisual items by the year 2020, with a seating capacity of 123 chairs and 38 computers for the public. A meeting room that can accommodate audiences up to 75, two small group study rooms and storytelling space would be available. The meeting room would serve as a cultural center for the entire city. The location of the library in the Civic Center is designed to allow the meeting room to open on the plaza next to City Hall, and be used in larger civic programs. Special attention would be focused on the needs of young adults, including a Young Adult area, a Career Center and a Technology Training Room.

The services and features of the new facility would meet, and in some cases exceed, recognized library planning guidelines. The new library would provide the community with a facility that meets its needs well beyond 2020.

## II. Assessment Methodology

### A. Executive Summary

The County of Los Angeles, the City of Lawndale and the Centinela Valley Union High School District began actively planning for a new library for Lawndale in 2001. A project planning committee was formed in June 2002. Several working groups were established at that time to focus on specific aspects, including community needs assessment, site acquisition, funding and a joint use collaborative project between the Library and the School District.

The County engaged an architectural firm, Gruen Associates, to analyze the proposed site, assess the existing library facility and develop conceptual plans and a project budget for the proposed library. Kathryn Page Associates, a library planning firm, was also engaged to conduct a community needs assessment and building program. A combination of community meetings, focus groups, surveys, and interviews—in English and in Spanish—were conducted in the summer and fall of 2002, and used to ensure input from all members of the community. The consultant and library administrators toured the community with knowledgeable City representatives to learn about community patterns, issues and plans from key community leaders.

Library staff interviews and an analysis of library statistics were conducted as well. The consultant spent time at the Lawndale Library, observed customer use patterns and discussed specific service needs with library staff.

The consultant reviewed prior facility planning studies that the County Library had undertaken, as well as the Library's strategic plan. This work formed the foundation for various space needs recommendations that emerged from the community needs assessment. All recommendations were tied back to the County Library's overall service planning efforts to ensure that the services and features of the proposed Lawndale Library were in keeping with the service direction of the County Library as a whole.

The consultant recommended service levels to the planning committee based on the needs assessment. County Library and City participants reviewed the recommendations and made adjustments. The revised recommendations were developed into a full-scale space needs assessment. This assessment was then used as a basis for a detailed building program for the library.

### B. Planning Effort

#### 1. County Library Planning Activities

The current effort to assess library service needs for Lawndale is the direct result of a series of facility and infrastructure planning projects undertaken by the County of Los Angeles Public Library during the past decade. Library administrative and planning staff have recognized the growing disparity between community library service needs and the library facilities' ability to meet those needs. In many parts of Los Angeles County, population increases and changing community demographics have outstripped existing facility resources. Anticipated population growth over the next quarter century is expected to exacerbate the current service deficits and, in some locations, effectively disenfranchise entire communities from library service.

Over the past five years, the County Library has taken several important steps to lay the groundwork required to address this situation. In 1998, the County Board of Supervisors established a development impact mitigation fee for library facilities. This program requires all residential developers to pay a library facility mitigation fee as a condition of obtaining a building permit for all new residential development. These fees are paid directly to the County Library and provide funding for new library facilities and services in rapidly growing parts of the County's unincorporated areas.

Another step that anticipated future capital projects, both new construction and existing building renovations, was the development of facility planning guidelines that call out standards for many aspects of library building design, from adjacency and space allocation needs to specified building finishes. Library planning staff worked with Charles Walton Associates A.I.A., Inc. to prepare a set of Facility Planning Guidelines that design professionals and County departments can use to specify improvements to existing facilities as well as to plan and design expansions and new construction.

A Facility Expansion Needs Assessment Study was completed in 2001 by Kathryn Page Associates under a separate contract with the County Library. The study evaluated each existing facility's ability to meet community needs for library service and provided a service-based framework by which to identify facilities most in need of expansion. Each facility was measured against a set of recognized library service indicators (square feet of space, collection size, seating capacity, number of public computers and meeting room space). Facilities were ranked in order by degree of service deficit. The facilities with the most severe deficits were identified.

During 2000 and 2001, Library planning staff worked with CIVIC Technologies, Inc., a geographic information systems (GIS) mapping and urban planning firm, to assemble and map accurate and comprehensive demographic information for the Library's 84 existing community library service areas. This project provided Library staff with an unprecedented level of current and future information regarding the communities served by the County Library.

In 2001-2002, Kathryn Page Associates conducted a second study for the Library, documenting a proposed set of service level guidelines. This study provided specific recommendations for County Library facilities in the areas of collection size and allocation, seating capacity, public computers, meeting room and programming spaces, and several other service components. The County Library is reviewing these recommendations for incorporation into its general facility planning guidelines.

The body of work represented by these planning documents and studies has given the County Library a strong foundation on which to build as it works with the Board of Supervisors, other County departments, and the cities it serves, to plan specific capital improvements.

## 2. Lawndale Library Planning Activities

Lawndale's need for an improved library facility has been a concern of the County Library for over a decade. In 1990, the Library submitted an application on Lawndale's behalf for construction funds made available through the California Library Construction



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and Renovation Bond Program. The project would have remodeled and expanded the existing library by approximately 3,400 square feet. Lawndale's project was not awarded bond funds, however, and the community has continued to use the existing library up to the present day. Structural and environmental limitations described in the 1991 application remain essentially as they were twelve years ago, although improvements to the interior (new carpet, repainting, ADA accessibility upgrades to the restrooms) were made in the late 1990s.

The Facility Expansion Needs Assessment Study completed in 2001 identified the existing Lawndale Library as one of the most severely constrained facilities currently operated by the County Library. Among the County Library's 84 community libraries, Lawndale ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in terms of the magnitude of its service deficits. It provides 3,203 square feet to serve a population of 31,711 or 0.10 square foot per capita.

In November 2001, the County Library began discussions with the County of Los Angeles Chief Administrative Office, the Second Supervisorial District, the County Department of Public Works and the City of Lawndale regarding the need for an expanded library. City of Lawndale officials identified a potential site for an expanded library within the Lawndale Civic Center in the area bounded by Burin Avenue, Grevillea Avenue, De Oro Lane and 149<sup>th</sup> Street. City and county officials reviewed potential building sites, but none existed in the city as it is almost completely built out. Lawndale voters have rejected eminent domain as an option for the city's redevelopment agency.

In June 2002, the County Department of Public Works engaged Gruen Associates, an architectural firm, to develop a conceptual design for a new library. Kathryn Page Associates was also engaged to conduct a library service needs assessment and prepare a building program for the new library.

A project committee was formed, with the Department of Public Works charged with overall project management. The committee included:

Margaret Donnellan Todd, County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Wendy Romano, County of Los Angeles Public Library  
David Flint, County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Robert Seal, County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Luis Adan, County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Stephen Klein, County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Linda Chavez Doyle, County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Ruth Morse, County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Elmita Brown, County of Los Angeles Public Library  
Ed Lindsay, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works, project manager  
David Howard, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Jim Daly, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works  
Chuck Bookhammer, Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Second District  
Norman Braverman, County of Los Angeles Chief Administrative Office  
Carlos Brea, County of Los Angeles Chief Administrative Office  
Vangie Schock, City of Lawndale  
Eric Hassel, City of Lawndale  
Blane Frandsen, City of Lawndale  
Linda Pittman, City of Lawndale

The project kickoff meeting took place on June 10, 2002. Monthly project meetings were held thereafter. The committee advised and assisted the consultants in planning and implementing the community needs assessment and space planning effort. In addition, the committee formed several working groups to address site and land acquisition issues, environmental review, budget and funding, library-school district cooperation and Library Bond Program grant application coordination.

### C. Community Input Strategies

#### 1. Community Survey

A community survey in English and in Spanish was developed by the needs assessment working group, with assistance from Kathryn Page Associates, and distributed in the community during June and July 2002. The survey questions were designed to identify the community's priorities for library services as well as their specific information and reading needs. Community members completed and returned 317 survey forms, either at the Lawndale Library or at a widely attended community concert held over the Fourth of July weekend. Seventy-two Spanish language responses and 245 English language responses were received. Respondents represented all age groups from 14 years and under through 65 years and older.

#### 2. Focus Groups and Community Meetings

One general community meeting and six focus group sessions were held at the Lawndale Civic Center, at Billy Mitchell Elementary School and the Leuzinger High School campus, from July 2002 through January 2003. The focus groups included teens (one session with a group of the City's teen volunteers and another with the student government class at Leuzinger High School), the Friends of the Lawndale Library, the Senior Citizens Advisory Committee, Hispanic parents of school age children (conducted in English and in Spanish), and teachers and administrators at Leuzinger High School. The consultant and the City ensured that all community groups were represented.

#### 3. Interviews

Kathryn Page also interviewed community, City and Library representatives, including the Lawndale Library public services staff (the Community Library Manager, the library assistant, the aides, and the pages), County Library management and administrative staff, Harold Hofmann, Lawndale Mayor, Linda Pittman, Lawndale Director of Community Services, Steve Farmer, Recreation Supervisor, Evette Wedlow-Benjamin, Community Services Coordinator for the City of Lawndale, and Dr. Joseph Condon, Superintendent of the Lawndale Elementary School District. Stephen Klein also met with Cyd Spikes, program manager for the South Bay One-Stop Business & Career Center, Robert Mejia of the South Bay Workforce Investment Board and Jose Fernandez, principal at the Centinela Valley Adult School, to elicit information on job training needs and current programs available to Lawndale residents.

#### 4. School Collaboration Planning

The County Library and City of Lawndale began discussions in 2001 with both school districts that serve Lawndale to explore possible areas of collaboration. With limited resources a reality for the County, the City and the school districts, the representatives of each jurisdiction saw that their common concerns could be addressed most effectively through a joint effort. All parties recognized the need to support students at all levels, from kindergarten through high school. As discussions proceeded, joint venture

possibilities with the Centinela Valley Union High School District emerged as the most promising avenue for collaboration. In October 2001, the High School District Board gave an early indication of its enthusiasm and commitment to collaboration by approving a resolution that supported a Career Center within the library as well as other services in support of student achievement.

A planning committee was formed during summer 2002 to pursue and articulate the joint venture projects that had been discussed informally for almost a year. On August 29, 2002, the committee held its first meeting. Subsequent planning meetings were held on a monthly basis from September through November 2002 to review the emerging service needs from the surveys, focus groups, and community meetings, and to prepare a draft joint use cooperative agreement between the County of Los Angeles and the High School District.

The planning committee included:

Wendy Romano, Assistant Director for Public Services, County of Los Angeles Public Library

Stephen Klein, West Regional Administrator, County of Los Angeles Public Library

Linda Chavez Doyle, Assistant West Regional Administrator, County of Los Angeles Public Library

Penny Markey, Youth Services Coordinator, County of Los Angeles Public Library

Eric Hassel, Assistant City Manager, City of Lawndale

Dr. Cheryl White, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services, Centinela Valley Union High School District

Trina Della Gatta, Coordinator, Federal and State Programs, Centinela Valley Union High School District

Given the many needs of Lawndale's student population, the planning group was challenged to select one or more projects that would provide the most benefit to the greatest number of students. Both the elementary and high school districts indicated concern that students who enter high school be prepared academically for high school work. In addition, the high school district indicated that they needed a location in the community for a career center to encourage young people to develop career paths early. In this community, it is essential that young people have a future. The school districts believe that if at-risk youth have the opportunity to "see a future" through the career center, it will motivate them to finish school and be more focused in their academic work.

Two projects were identified—a Homework Center and a Career Center—that the team believed would offer the most benefit to Lawndale youth. The projects selected are:

a. Homework Center

Both school districts recognize that good academic preparation is essential for success in high school. The districts have identified that there is a significant problem with 9<sup>th</sup> grade students who lack the requisite academic skills to succeed. Both districts believe that a homework center will be part of a larger solution to this problem. The Homework Center will provide materials, resources, computers, and formal support to assist students and their families with homework and study assignments and skill-building in reading and writing.

The library will provide approximately 600 square feet of space, located in the Children's Services Area, to be used as the Homework Center. The Center will be available for independent study and assistance to students by volunteers recruited and referred by the District, including high school students who are seeking community service experience, exploring teaching as a career choice or enrolled in the District's library service training program.

The Center will include six computer workstations, equipped with web links to appropriate homework sites, and a collection of curriculum related books and other materials, including one copy of each core school textbook used in the elementary and middle schools.

#### b. Career Center

Community leaders and the school district recognize that the lower educational levels and lower income levels need to be turned around. The Career Center will provide an opportunity to research job, career, and college education information. Through the provision of materials, resources, programs, and classes, the Career Center will address the need to support youth, including youth at risk, and adults who need access to information and guidance on career advancement and job skills.

The library will provide approximately 460 square feet of space to be used as the Career Center, located in close proximity to the library's Information Desk. The center will provide a place for independent study and assistance for students to assess and pursue vocational, educational and career choices.

The Center will include four computer workstations, each equipped with career guidance, college selection and job readiness software and web links to relevant Internet sites. It will also house a print collection of career materials, in both English and Spanish, and other languages as appropriate. Copies of core textbooks that support the Center's mission will be provided by the District and will be housed here.

The District and the Library will also partner with the South Bay Workforce Investment Board to offer classes to youth focused on conducting a job search, successful interview techniques and appropriate behavior at the workplace. These classes will be offered in the library's Meeting Room or Conference Room, depending on class size.

The project concept was presented to the Centinela Valley Union High School District Board in October 2002. The School Board approved the proposal and cooperative agreement on December 9, 2003. The County Board of Supervisors approved the cooperative agreement on January 6, 2004.

### III. Community Analysis

#### A. Executive Summary

Lawndale is a geographically compact, built out, primarily residential, highly urbanized community located in the South Bay area of the Los Angeles basin. The community was established in the 1890s, following the opening of train service between the seaport at Redondo Beach and the City of Los Angeles. In 1959, Lawndale became an incorporated city within Los Angeles County. Its boundaries form a two square mile area bordered by Hawthorne to the north, Gardena to the east, Torrance to the south and Redondo Beach to the west. Major transportation routes include Interstate Highway 405 (San Diego Freeway), Highway 91 (Artesia Boulevard) and Highway 107 (Hawthorne Boulevard). The City is governed by a five-member city council and is administered by a city manager. The civic center is located in the heart of the community.

In 2000, the population reached 31,711 people, a 35% increase over the 1980 population. The projected population for 2020 is 35,000 people, which represents a more modest 10% increase. Family households account for 73.5% of the current population. The median age is 29.3 years. There are 10,966 children and youth 19 years or younger living in Lawndale, or 34.6% of the population. On average, 3.31 people live in each household. The growing school-age population, with a 2002/03 enrollment of 10,726 K-12 students, has created overcrowded conditions at every school in Lawndale. Lawndale High School was reopened two years ago to ease crowding at Leuzinger High School and other campuses served by the Centinela Valley Union High School District. Two new schools, one elementary school and one middle school, will open in Lawndale in 2004. Seniors (65 years or older) represent 5.6% of the population, a decrease from 5.8% in 1990 and 6.1% in 1980.

The community is 52.1% Hispanic, including individuals of all races. The balance of the population is 42.2% White, 12.6% African American and 9.6% Asian. Primarily a working class and middle class community, Lawndale's per capita income was \$13,702 in 2000. Most homes are renter-occupied (66.8%). Adults with a high school diploma, some college or a college degree make up 63.4% of the population that is 25 years or older. Over half (51.5%) of the work force is employed in sales and service industries. The median property value in 2000 was \$178,700, 15% less than the median property value for Los Angeles County overall.

Lawndale has a clear identity and its citizens work together to address community concerns and promote a sense of place in the city. The Lawndale Civic Center is a focal point in the city. Here residents come together to gather for festive events and conduct business with City Hall and the library. After school, children gather to play on the grounds of the Civic Center. Senior citizens congregate to enjoy a nutritious lunch on the patio and to perform country western line dancing.

The Civic Center is used for such citywide special events as city anniversary celebration, Halloween haunt, and the angel tree lighting ceremony. These events are generally held at night and attract as many as 4,000 residents. They are celebrations of the community's youth and families. Thousands of Lawndale children have met Santa for the first time at the Civic Center. At Halloween, the city gathers for a safe party including rides, booths, face painting, entertainment, and a haunted house.

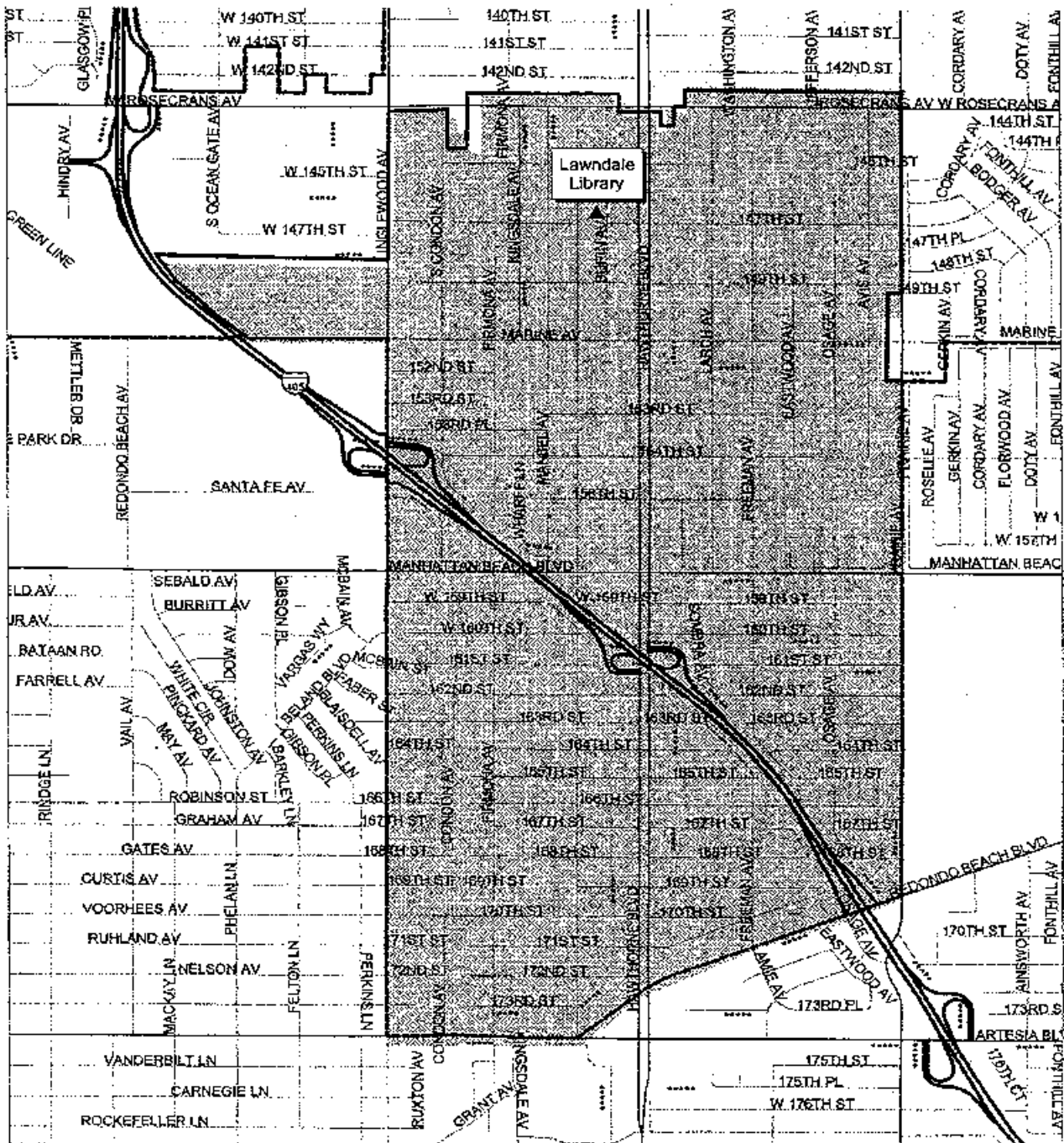
The needs of children and youth are a prime focus of community concern. Comments from parents, educators and Lawndale City officials all centered on the quality of life, safety and education of the community's children and youth. "This is a city of kids" was a recurring comment at community meetings, along with stories of the overwhelming response to annual community events such as the Santa Sleigh Ride in December or the Multicultural Summer Concert at Jane Addams Park. The elementary school district is building two new schools to ease overcrowding in the City's schools.

Many socioeconomic factors in Lawndale place its children and youth at risk. Underachievement in school and involvement in gang-related activity are two areas in which evidence of the impact of the environment are most evident. The City's Community Services Department prepared a Youth Master Plan in 2001 that identified the need for a center for youth activities. This work led to the creation of a youth center, the Bollinger Memorial Gym, which opened in 2002. At the same time, the City and the County Department of Parks and Recreation also applied for funds to construct a skate park in Alondra Park, located at Lawndale's eastern boundary. That application was not successful, due to the highly competitive pool of grant applicants. If funded, the skate park would have contributed to mitigating the impact of gang activity in the area, a major community concern.

Lawndale recently completed a major civic infrastructure improvement project to upgrade Hawthorne Boulevard, its "main street" and a major north-south thoroughfare for the region. This revitalization project improved the roadway itself, upgrading traffic signals and lighting, adding median parking, improving sidewalks, adding trees, landscaping and bus shelters and stimulating retail business all along the Hawthorne Boulevard corridor. A key part of this renovation is to upgrade the Civic Center. The library building will provide the "gateway" from Hawthorne Boulevard to the Civic Center.

Lawndale is well served by public transportation, with a Metropolitan Transit Authority light rail station located at Manhattan Beach Boulevard and Inglewood Avenue, along the City's western border. The MTA bus system and the fixed-route Lawndale Beat shuttle bus provide public transportation to the City's residential and commercial areas, including free transportation to riders 17 years or younger. The City has excellent public transportation, but it is important to remember that in a two square mile city, the community does not use buses or shuttles to come to the Civic Center. Many people walk, bike, or ride.

B. Service Area Map



County of Los Angeles Public Library

Library Service Area Mapping Project

Scale 1:18,000

0 0.75 Mile



Lawndale  
Service Area: 2000 & 2020

City Served County Library

Marc A. Futterman & Associates, November 2001

C. Government Agencies and Officials

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

The Board of Supervisors has approval authority over the project. As the Bond Program applicant, the Board must approve the application, including the architectural conceptual plans, the community needs assessment and the building program. The Board must certify: (1) the availability of local matching funds; (2) its commitment to provide library services at the facility for forty years and (3) that existing revenues will cover the costs required to operate the facility. In addition, the Board must approve the joint use cooperative agreement between the County of Los Angeles and the Centinela Valley Union High School District.

County of Los Angeles Chief Administrative Office

The staff of the Chief Administrative Office serves on the project planning team and oversees the project on behalf of the Board of Supervisors.

County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works

The Department of Public Works is providing project management to the project and general coordination between County departments, the City of Lawndale and architectural and other consultants to the project.

County of Los Angeles Public Library

The County Library initiated the planning process and has worked actively with the City of Lawndale and the Centinela Valley Union High School District to support the community needs assessment process, develop the plan of service, and prepare a cooperative joint use agreement. The County Library will operate the library in its proposed new facility.

City of Lawndale

The City of Lawndale serves on the project planning team. It will provide both land on which to construct the proposed new library and monetary contributions to the local matching portion of the project budget.

Centinela Valley Union High School District Board

The Board of the Centinela Valley Union High School District must approve the joint use cooperative agreement between the County of Los Angeles and the District.

Key government officials:

Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Supervisor, Los Angeles County, represents the Second Supervisorial District in which the City of Lawndale is located and has been an advocate for improved library services within her district. She has been instrumental in providing the required County matching funds for the proposed project. The Supervisor and her staff have also been essential in facilitating cooperative efforts with city officials relating to their participation in the development and planning of the project.

Harold Hofmann, Mayor, City of Lawndale, has been a staunch advocate for the project both within the community and with the County Board of Supervisors .

Margaret Donnellan Todd, County Librarian, County of Los Angeles Public Library, has championed strategic planning and facilities planning for the County's libraries throughout her tenure. She has supported the effort to plan and construct a new library



for Lawndale in several ways. She serves on the project committee, has ensured that key Library personnel and other Library resources are made available to the project, and communicates project status and needs to the Second Supervisorial District office.

#### D. School Agencies

The proposed new Lawndale Library will serve students who attend the elementary and middle schools of the Lawndale Elementary School District as well as two of the high schools in the Centinela Valley Union High School District - Lawndale High School and Leuzinger High School. In addition, the project will serve students at the Environmental Charter High School and three private schools in Lawndale.

Currently, the Lawndale Elementary School District maintains six elementary schools, one middle school and a charter school (grade 9) as listed below. By 2004, the District will open a new elementary school on the site of a former preschool facility and establish a second middle school on the site of an existing elementary school.

- Addams Elementary School (scheduled to become a middle school by 2004)
- Anderson Elementary School
- Environmental Charter School
- Green Elementary School
- Mitchell Elementary School
- Roosevelt Elementary School
- Twain Elementary School
- Rogers Middle School
- Smith Preschool site (scheduled to become a new elementary school by 2004)

Elementary and middle schools each have a library on campus. The middle school library, however, is the only facility with a certificated librarian; others are staffed by parent volunteers. Both high school campuses include a library, staffed by paraprofessionals. All school libraries are open to students only during school hours, generally from 7:30 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. Operating budgets for all school libraries have been drastically reduced in 2002/03. Title V funds which were used to support the libraries' materials budgets have been redirected to support other school needs.

#### E. Community Organizations

Numerous community organizations will be served by the project. Thirteen local organizations as well as several City of Lawndale-sponsored groups are listed below. In addition, the new library will serve community organizations with service areas that cover Lawndale and neighboring communities, such as the Bay Cities Lions Club, based in nearby Harbor City.

Lawndale community organizations:

Centinela Valley YMCA  
El Camino Kiwanis  
House of Yahweh  
Lawndale Chamber of Commerce

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Lawndale Friends of the Library  
Lawndale Girl Scouts of America  
Lawndale Little League  
Lawndale Pop Warner Football  
Lawndale Property Owners' Association  
Lawndale Sister City Association  
Lawndale Women's Club  
Optimist Club of Lawndale  
Parent-Teachers Association  
Rise and Shine  
Rotary Club of Lawndale

City-sponsored commissions and committees:

Beautification Committee  
Cable Commission  
Parks Commission  
Planning Commission  
Senior Citizens Advisory Committee

Community organizations have very limited options for meeting room space in Lawndale. The City offers a meeting room at the civic center that groups may reserve, but access to meeting rooms at local schools is very limited. The existing library has no meeting room space whatsoever. Many community respondents commented on the need for easily accessible, no-cost or low-cost meeting room space.

The new library will also provide community organizations with an opportunity to publicize and inform the community about their activities and services through displays and exhibits, special programs, and donations of books, magazines and other materials related to their purpose.

F. Demographic Profile

1. Population - Current and Trends

In 2000, Lawndale had 31,711 residents, according to the U.S. Census, which represents a 35% increase in population since 1980. The City's two square mile area is almost completely built out. By 2020, the population is projected to grow to 35,000, according to the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). This additional population will be accommodated either by additional single-family infill units built on underutilized parcels or by existing housing units accommodating larger family sizes. The 2020 projection of 35,000 people represents a more modest 10% growth rate over the next twenty years, a reasonable expectation given the community's highly urbanized character. This growth rate is also in keeping with 2020 projections for other South Bay communities with limited land available for new development. Hawthorne, for example, is expected to grow by only 6% and Gardena by 11%. In contrast, the populations of the City of Los Angeles and of Los Angeles County as a whole are expected to grow overall by 20% by the year 2020.

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Table 1.  
Population

	1980 Population	1990 Population	2000 Population	2020 Population
Lawndale	23,460	27,331	31,711	35,000
Hawthorne	56,447	71,349	78,516	83,101
Gardena	45,165	51,487	58,726	65,064
Los Angeles City	2,966,850	3,485,398	3,786,240	4,517,784
Los Angeles County	7,477,503	8,863,164	9,798,884	11,717,826

Source: 1980, 1990, 2000 U.S. Census; SCAG

## 2. Age Breakdown

Lawndale's youth population is large and is expected to grow even larger – according to the 2000 U.S. Census, 10,966, or 34.6%, of the community's residents were 19 years or younger, increasing from 30.1% of the population in 1990. Lawndale has a higher concentration of children and youth than Los Angeles County (30.9% in 2000), the state (30.1%) or the nation overall (28.6%). These figures support comments by parents, educators and city officials that "Lawndale is a city of kids". As the aerospace industry workers who accounted for the City's initial population growth retire and relocate, younger families with children are occupying the City's existing, affordable housing stock. The community has identified a larger, modern library facility as essential for the growing children's population.

Over the past decade, Lawndale's senior population (aged 65 and older) has remained stable at 5.6% of the total population. This percentage is significantly less than the senior population of the County (9.7% in 2000), the state (10.7%) or the United States (12.4%).

Lawndale's median age in 2000 was 29.3 years, up slightly from 28.7 years in 1990, but considerably lower than Los Angeles County's 2000 median age of 32 years, California's median of 33.3 years, and the U.S. median of 35.3 years.

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Table 2.  
Population by Age, 2000

Age Group	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
0 – 4	2,950	737,631	2,486,981	19,175,798
	9.3%	7.7%	7.3%	6.8%
5 – 9	3,222	802,047	2,725,880	20,549,505
	10.2%	8.4%	8.0%	7.3%
10 – 14	2,589	723,652	2,570,822	20,528,072
	8.2%	7.6%	7.6%	7.3%
15 – 19	2,205	683,466	2,450,888	20,219,890
	7.0%	7.2%	7.2%	7.2%
20 – 24	2,376	701,837	2,381,288	18,964,001
	7.5%	7.4%	7.0%	6.7%
25 – 34	6,178	1,581,722	5,229,062	39,891,724
	19.5%	16.6%	15.4%	14.2%
35 – 44	5,190	1,517,478	5,485,341	45,148,527
	16.4%	15.9%	16.2%	16%
45 – 54	3,353	1,148,612	4,331,635	37,677,952
	10.6%	12.1%	12.8%	13.4%
55 – 59	1,036	389,457	1,467,252	13,469,237
	3.3%	4.1%	4.3%	4.8%
60 – 64	824	306,763	1,146,841	10,805,447
	2.6%	3.2%	3.4%	3.8%
65 – 74	1,123	492,833	1,887,823	18,390,986
	3.5%	5.2%	5.6%	6.5%
75 – 84	539	324,693	1,282,178	12,361,180
	1.7%	3.4%	3.8%	4.4%
85+	126	109,147	425,657	4,239,587
	0.4%	1.1%	1.3%	1.5%
Median Age	29.3 years	32 years	33.3 years	35.3 years

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 3.  
Percent of Population by Age, 2000

Age Group	% of Population Lawndale	% of Population L.A. County	% of Population California	% of Population U.S.
0 – 19	34.6%	30.9%	30.1%	28.6%
20 – 24	7.5%	7.4%	7.0%	6.7%
25 – 44	35.9%	32.5%	31.6%	30.2%
45 – 64	16.5%	19.4%	20.5%	22.0%
65+	5.6%	9.7%	10.7%	12.4%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

### 3. Students, Schools and Academic Performance Index Scores

There were 10,643 students enrolled in Lawndale public schools during the 2002/03 academic year. Another 83 students were attending the three private schools in Lawndale, for a total of 10,726 K-12 students. School District personnel report that the existing school facilities are overcrowded and expansion plans will barely keep pace with the projected increases in students. Seventy-six percent of the children attending Lawndale elementary and middle schools receive free or reduced-cost lunches. Forty-three percent are from families that receive AFDC assistance.

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Table 4.  
Students in Lawndale Schools, Grades K-12, 2002-03

School	Enrollment	Total
<b>Public Schools</b>		
<b>Elementary Schools</b>		
Addams (Jane)	853	
Anderson (William)	936	
Green (William)	1,006	
Mitchell (Billy)	700	
Roosevelt (F.D.)	1,001	
Twain (Mark)	450	4,946
<b>Middle Schools</b>		
Rogers (Will)	1,236	1,236
<b>High Schools</b>		
Lawndale	1,245	
Leuzinger	3,004	
Environmental Charter School*	212	4,461
<b>Private Schools**</b>		
Children First Child Development, Pre-Kindergarten-Kindergarten (PK-KG)	40	
Marine Avenue Pre-school (PK-KG)	36	
Vine Christian Academy (5-11)	7	83
<b>Total</b>		10,726

Source: Centinela Valley Union High School District, 12/02

Lawndale Elementary School District, 1/03

\*Charter school administered by Lawndale Elementary School District

\*\*National Center for Education Statistics

Base Academic Performance Index (API) scores for Lawndale's elementary schools increased this past year and each school met its growth target. The middle school score actually declined somewhat and the two high schools remained at last year's level. Neither the middle school nor the high schools met their growth targets.

The Academic Performance Index is a numeric index that ranges from a low of 200 to a high of 1,000, with 800 set as the interim API score that schools should strive to meet. Schools that fall short of 800 are required to meet annual growth targets until their goal is achieved.

The API Base and Growth Reports, shown in Appendix D, include each school's API scores, the 2001-2002 growth targets and actual growth, whether the targets were met, and each school's eligibility for awards.

Schools that meet or exceed their growth targets may be eligible to receive monetary awards through the Governor's Performance Award Program. To be eligible for these awards, schools also must show that they met student participation rate requirements.

Schools that do not meet their growth targets may be eligible to receive special assistance through the Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP). If schools continue not to meet their growth target, they may be subject to local or state sanctions.

The community and civic leaders believe that a new library will assist in improving education for Lawndale students.

#### 4. Educational Attainment and Adult Literacy Rate

Lawndale residents 25 years and older have a lower overall educational achievement level than the levels attained by the population of Los Angeles County, California and the U.S. population. Of the 25 and older population in Lawndale, 63.4% has been awarded a high school, college or more advanced degree, compared to 69.9% of 25+ County residents, 76.7% of 25+ California residents and 80.3% of residents nationwide.

Thirty-three percent of the parents of Leuzinger High School students did not possess a high school diploma in 2001, according to the State Department of Education. Another 30% had a high school diploma and 36% had completed some college courses or had a college degree.

The Career Center is an important part of the Centinela Valley Union High School District's goal to improve graduation rates and ensure career paths for their students. The District Superintendent, Dr. Julian Lopez, has stated that without technical training or a bachelor's degree, his students will be condemned to work in the fast food industry.

Table 5.  
Population by Educational Attainment for Persons 25+, 2000

Education	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade	3,207	955,932	2,446,324	13,755,477
	17.5%	16.2%	11.5%	7.5%
9 <sup>th</sup> to 12 <sup>th</sup> grade (no diploma)	3,513	814,592	2,496,419	21,960,148
	19.1%	13.8%	11.7%	12.1%
High school graduate/GED	4,785	1,108,314	4,288,452	52,168,981
	26.1%	18.8%	20.1%	28.6%
Some college, no degree	3,561	1,174,477	4,879,336	38,351,595
	19.4%	20.0%	22.9%	21.0%
Associate degree	989	367,244	1,518,403	11,512,833
	5.4%	6.2%	7.1%	6.3%
Bachelor's degree	1,561	945,634	3,640,157	28,137,792
	8.5%	16.1%	17.1%	15.5%
Graduate or professional degree	737	516,755	2,029,809	16,144,813
	4.0%	8.8%	9.5%	8.9%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 6.  
High School and College Graduates, 2000

	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
% high school graduate or higher	63.4%	69.9%	76.7%	80.3%
% bachelor's degree or higher	12.5%	24.9%	26.6%	24.4%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

In 1993, an estimated 53% of Lawndale's adult residents read and wrote English at the two lowest literacy levels, 28% at the lowest level and an additional 25% at the second lowest level, according to the nation-wide Adult Literacy Survey conducted by the National Institute for Literacy (see *Appendix E*). This literacy rate parallels the rate for Los Angeles County as a whole, at 55% (32% at the lowest level and 27% at the second lowest level), higher than the rate for California (46%) and higher than the rate for the United States (50%). A career center in this community will motivate youth and help adults.

## 5. Ethnic Breakdown

Lawndale is ethnically diverse and is growing steadily more so. The percentage of residents of all races who identify themselves as Hispanic has grown from 28.4% in 1980 to 34.4% in 1990 to 52.1% in 2000. African American residents have grown from 2.6% in 1980 to 7.6% in 1990 to 12.6% in 2000. The Asian communities have increased from 6.7% in 1980 to 9.6% in the 2000 Census.

The number of people who identify themselves as belonging to two or more races or to "some other race" has also increased over the past twenty years, making parallel comparisons over time more difficult. It is apparent, however, that the Lawndale community includes representatives of many cultural and linguistic groups and, on a per capita basis, is more diverse than any of the larger geographic units within which it is located.

Table 7.  
Ethnicity, 2000

Ethnic Group	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
White	13,394	4,637,062	20,170,059	211,460,626
	42.2%	46.7%	59.5%	75.1%
Black or African American	3,998	930,957	2,263,882	34,658,190
	12.6%	9.8%	6.7%	12.3%
American Indian & Alaska Native	313	76,988	333,346	2,475,956
	1.0%	0.8%	1.0%	0.9%
Asian Indian	206	60,268	314,819	1,678,765
	0.6%	0.6%	0.9%	0.6%
Chinese	198	329,352	980,642	2,432,585
	0.6%	3.5%	2.9%	0.9%
Filipino	664	260,158	918,678	1,850,314
	2.1%	2.7%	2.7%	0.7%
Japanese	183	111,349	288,854	796,700
	0.6%	1.2%	0.9%	0.3%
Korean	116	186,350	345,882	1,076,872
	0.4%	2.0%	1.0%	0.4%
Vietnamese	1,436	78,102	447,032	1,122,528
	4.5%	0.8%	1.3%	0.4%
Other Asian	252	111,921	401,606	1,285,234
	0.8%	1.2%	1.2%	0.5%
Native Hawaiian & other Pacific Islander	289	27,053	116,961	398,835
	0.9%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%
Some other race	8,584	2,239,997	5,682,241	15,359,073
	27.1%	23.5%	16.8%	5.5%
Two or more races	2,078	469,781	1,607,646	6,826,228
	6.6%	4.9%	4.7%	2.4%
Hispanic (of any race)	18,515	4,242,213	10,966,556	35,305,818
	52.1%	44.6%	32.4%	12.5%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Lawndale's ethnic diversity is also reflected in the City's schools. During 2001/02, 62% of the students in grades K-12 were Hispanic, 20.5% were African American, 7.6% were White and 6.6% were Asian. The elementary schools' student bodies collectively contained a higher percentage of Hispanics (65.8%), Asians (7.4%) and Whites (9.4%). Middle and high school students include a large percentage of Hispanic and African American students, as well, with 58.4% Hispanic and 26.5% African American.

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Table 8.  
Public School Enrollment & Enrollment by Ethnicity, 2001-02\*

	American Indian	Asian	Pacific Islander	Filipino	Hispanic	African American	White	Multiple/ No Response	Total
Elementary Schools									
Addams	7	64	6	7	606	83	85	0	858
	0.8%	7.5%	0.7%	0.8%	70.6%	9.7%	9.9%	0.0%	100%
Anderson	9	77	16	12	621	107	72	0	914
	1.0%	8.4%	1.8%	1.3%	67.9%	11.7%	7.9%	0.0%	100%
Green	6	52	13	8	729	85	105	0	998
	0.6%	5.2%	1.3%	0.8%	73.0%	8.5%	10.5%	0.0%	100%
Mitchell	6	36	10	7	459	128	56	0	702
	0.9%	5.1%	1.4%	1.0%	65.4%	18.2%	8.0%	0.0%	100%
Roosevelt	1	52	13	14	616	250	29	0	975
	0.1%	5.3%	1.3%	1.4%	63.2%	25.6%	3.0%	0.0%	100%
Twain	1	83	3	10	205	56	116	0	474
	0.2%	17.5%	0.6%	2.1%	43.2%	11.8%	24.5%	0.0%	100%
Elementary	30	364	61	58	3236	709	463	0	4921
Subtotal	0.6%	7.4%	1.2%	1.2%	65.8%	14.4%	9.4%	0.0%	100%
Middle & High Schools									
Rogers	5	80	12	14	721	224	118	0	1174
Middle	0.4%	6.8%	1.0%	1.2%	61.4%	19.1%	10.1%	0.0%	100%
Lawndale	2	35	8	19	728	375	109	5	1281
High	0.2%	2.7%	0.6%	1.5%	56.8%	29.3%	8.5%	0.4%	100%
Leuzinger	11	182	39	35	1507	742	71	17	2604
High	0.4%	7.0%	1.5%	1.3%	57.9%	28.5%	2.7%	0.7%	100%
Middle & High	18	297	59	68	2956	1341	298	22	5059
Subtotal	0.4%	5.9%	1.2%	1.3%	58.4%	26.5%	5.9%	0.4%	100%
Total	48	661	120	126	6192	2050	761	22	9980
All Grades	0.5%	6.6%	1.2%	1.3%	62.0%	20.5%	7.6%	0.2%	100%

Source: California Department of Education

\*Environmental Charter School and private schools excluded



## 6. Household Characteristics

Families represented almost three-quarters (73.5%) of Lawndale's households in 2000, higher than the percentage of families in Los Angeles County, in California, or in the United States. This percentage is also an increase over 1990, when 67% of Lawndale households were families. The average household size in Lawndale in 2000 was 3.31 people per household, which is higher than any of the larger jurisdictional units. It also represents an increase over 1990, when the average household size in Lawndale was 2.95 people. Density is a key issue for the community.

Table 9.  
Households, 2000

	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
Total # of hhs	9,555	3,133,774	11,502,870	105,480,101
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total # of people in hhs	31,625	9,344,086	33,051,894	273,643,273
	99.7%	98.2%	97.6%	97.2%
Total # of family hhs	7,025	2,136,977	7,920,049	71,787,347
	73.5%	68.2%	68.9%	68.1%
Total # of family hhs w/children under 18	4,346	1,152,502	4,117,036	34,588,368
	45.5%	36.8%	35.8%	32.8%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 10.  
Average Number of People per Household, 2000

Year	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
2000	3.31	2.98	2.87	2.59

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Lawndale has a high percentage of renters. The ratio of renter-occupied to owner-occupied housing units in 2000 was two-to-one (66.8% to 33.2%). This ratio deviates significantly from the percentages for the County, the state and the nation.

Table 11.  
Occupied Housing Units by Type of Occupant, 2000

	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
Total occupied housing units	9,555	3,133,774	11,502,870	105,480,101
	100%	100%	100%	100%
Owner-occupied housing units	3,177	1,499,744	6,546,334	69,815,753
	33.2%	47.9%	56.9%	66.2%
Renter-occupied housing units	6,378	1,634,030	4,956,536	35,664,348
	66.8%	52.1%	43.1%	33.8%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

## 7. Income Levels and Poverty Rate

Most Lawndale residents are people of modest means. The per capita income in 1999 was \$13,702, well below Los Angeles County's average of \$20,683 per capita income, California's average of \$22,711 and the United States' average of \$21,587. Median household income in Lawndale in 2000 was \$39,012, almost 10% lower than the median for Los Angeles County as a whole and 18% lower than the median for California households.

The percentages of individuals and families in Lawndale living below the poverty level – 17.3% and 14.3% respectively – match the rates for Los Angeles County as a whole and exceed the rates for all Californians and Americans.

Table 12.  
Per Capita Income, 1999

Year	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
1999	\$13,702	\$20,683	\$22,711	\$21,587

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 13.  
Median Household Income, 1999

Year	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
1999	\$39,012	\$42,189	\$47,493	\$41,994

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 14.  
Population Percent below Poverty Level, 1999

	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
Individuals	17.3%	17.9%	14.2%	12.4%
Families	14.3%	14.4%	10.6%	9.2%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

## 8. Employment and Unemployment

Lawndale residents in the work force are most frequently employed in sales and office work occupations (30.5%) or service jobs (21%). An additional 20.6% are employed in management or professional positions, followed by 17.2% in the production or transportation industries. Lawndale's unemployment rate was 6.9% at the end of 2002, slightly higher than the rate for Los Angeles County (6.8%) and higher than California (6.7%) and the United States (6.0%). Local social service providers report that it is particularly difficult to place youth in entry-level jobs in Lawndale due to the small number of large retail or commercial establishments. Placements must be made at firms in surrounding communities and youth are often unable to find transportation to and from work.

The local business community is made up primarily of small, often family-owned firms. There are few large-scale industrial establishments or major commercial firms located within the City.

Table 15.  
Population by Occupation, 2000

Occupation	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
Management, professional, & related occupations	2,718	1,355,973	5,295,069	43,646,731
	20.6%	34.3%	36.0%	33.6%
Service occupations	2,765	580,809	2,173,874	19,276,947
	21.0%	14.7%	14.8%	14.9%
Sales & office occupations	4,030	1,090,059	3,939,383	34,621,390
	30.5%	27.6%	26.8%	26.7%
Farming, fishing & forestry occupations	n/a	6,650	196,695	951,810
	n/a	0.2%	1.3%	0.7%
Construction, extraction & maintenance occupations	1,421	306,450	1,239,160	12,256,138
	10.8%	7.8%	8.4%	9.4%
Production, transportation, & material moving occupations	2,264	613,474	1,874,747	18,968,496
	17.2%	15.5%	12.7%	14.6%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Table 16.  
Unemployment Rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Year	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
1990	6.0%	5.9%	5.8%	5.6%
2000	5.5%	5.4%	4.9%	4.0%
2001	5.8%	5.7%	5.3%	4.8%
2002	6.9%	6.8%	6.7%	6.0%*

Source: California Employment Development Department

\* December 2002

## 9. Housing Property Values

Lawndale's median property values are considerably lower than the prices that prevail throughout Los Angeles County and California - \$178,700 compared to \$209,300 and \$211,500 respectively. Since the post World War II era, the community has served as a source of attractively priced houses for families purchasing a first home. The national median of \$119,600 is considerably lower than median property values anywhere in California.

Table 17.  
Median Property Value, 2000 (Owner-occupied Housing Units)

Year	Lawndale	L.A. County	California	U.S.
2000	\$178,700	\$209,300	\$211,500	\$119,600

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

## G. Community Characteristics Analysis and Discussion

Lawndale is a geographically compact, highly urbanized community. In 2000, 31,711 people lived within the two square miles of its boundaries. The Southern California Association of Governments has projected that the population will grow approximately 10% over the next twenty years, to an estimated 35,000 people.

Lawndale's population is made up primarily of families with school-age children living at home, with 73.5% of the population living in family households in 2000. The median age in 2000 was 29.3 years, including close to 11,000 children and youth, 34.6% of the